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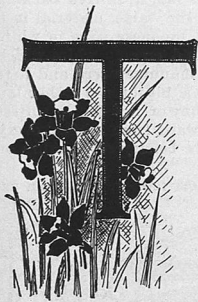
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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

ECONOMICAL HOUSE FURNISHING.

BY ALICE CHITTENDEN.



TWO or three years ago a certain Gotham novelist and his charming wife began housekeeping in a cosy top flat. For their joint capital they had youth and genius and manly strength and feminine grace and beauty and daintiness, but very little money. Still, the flat must be furnished—and it was; but so different from the cosey little suite described in the February *DECORATOR* that a description of it may be interesting, considering the fact that there are thousands of homes furnished every year by as many men and women of as many minds.

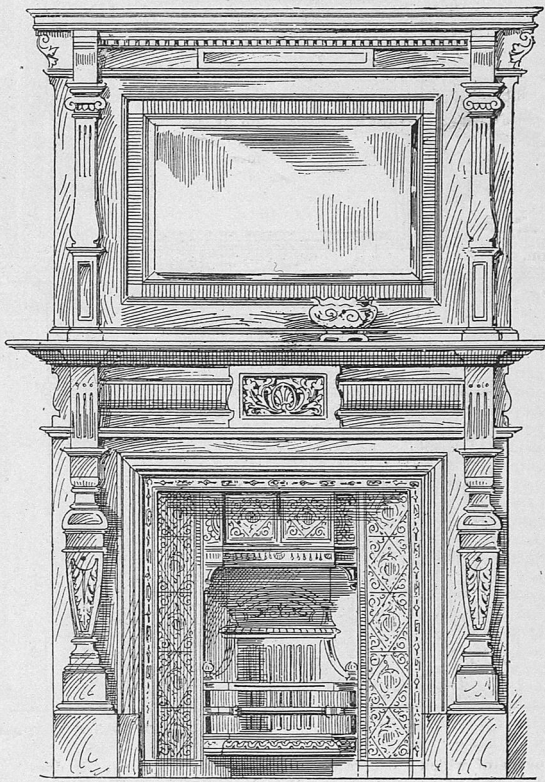
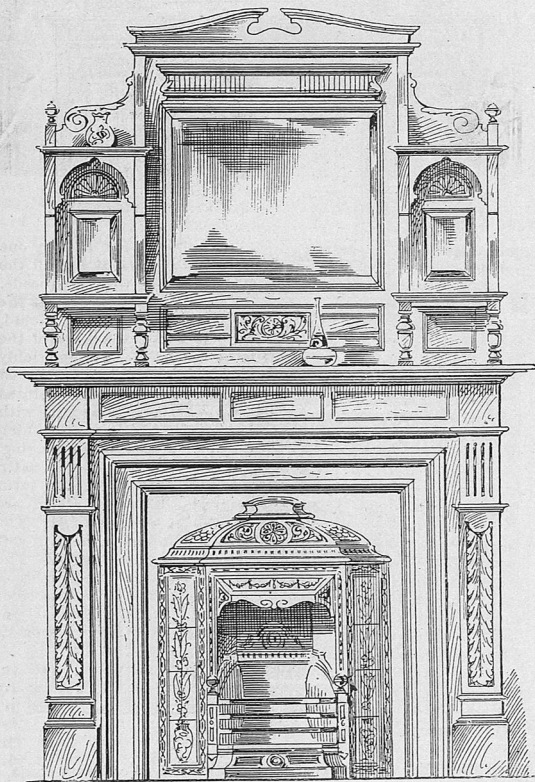
There was no sum of money set apart to cover the outlay; they simply began with such neces-

floor were puttied. The kitchen was left for Gretchen to scrub into a white likeness of her German home.

Flat kitchens do not call for a very great outlay in the way of furniture, but \$25.00 was laid aside in their bank—madame's pocket-book—for kitchen utensils.

A large packing-box, 30 inches high, 42 long and 24 wide—one of the many that had brought our author's books—was stood on its side at the kitchen window; the front removed, the framework firmly screwed together, and behold! the kitchen table. Shelves were fitted in from the boards that had composed the front, the top was planed and covered with a neat piece of white oilcloth, the bare sides received a coat of oak stain and across the front was a curtain of brown denim shirred on a wire. On these shelves were to be stowed various kitchen stores in the way of dry groceries—for closet room was scarce. A kitchen chair cost 35 cents, and, together with denim and oilcloth, brought the furnishing of the kitchen up to \$25.85.

The dining-room floor had only a border stained, as a Byzantine rug in softest creams and terra cottas at a cost of \$14.00 was purchased for the middle of the floor. There was a grand chance for economy in the choice of a table. An ordinary deal affair, unstained, with leaves which let down, making



DESIGNS FOR MODERN MANTEL-PIECES.

saries as they could supply and added comforts and luxuries as they could. Like all sensible people, too, they began with the floors, which required an outlay of \$1.00 for a gallon of stain and \$1.50 for two quarts of varnish, with fifty cents for putty. Our novelist was not above filling the cracks in the parlor floor with this himself, pressing in the putty while soft with an old knife. Bedrooms and parlor were finished in cherry, and it was decided to stain the floors a rich mahogany. The dining-room was in oak, and this floor had a border three feet wide stained in dark oak and varnished, but only the cracks of the parlor

it oblong when open, cost \$2.50. The largest ready-made size is 5 feet long and 40 inches wide, but it may be ordered a foot or two longer without extra cost from any dealer. It was sanded-papered into smoothness and stained and varnished into a fair likeness of old oak. The legs were shortened and four brass claws holding a brass ball were nailed on, adding \$1.50 more to the cost and about \$10 to its appearance. A tablecover of blue denim, washed and boiled into a delicious soft blue had a wide hem feather-stitched in deep cream linen floss and cost an additional 80 cents.

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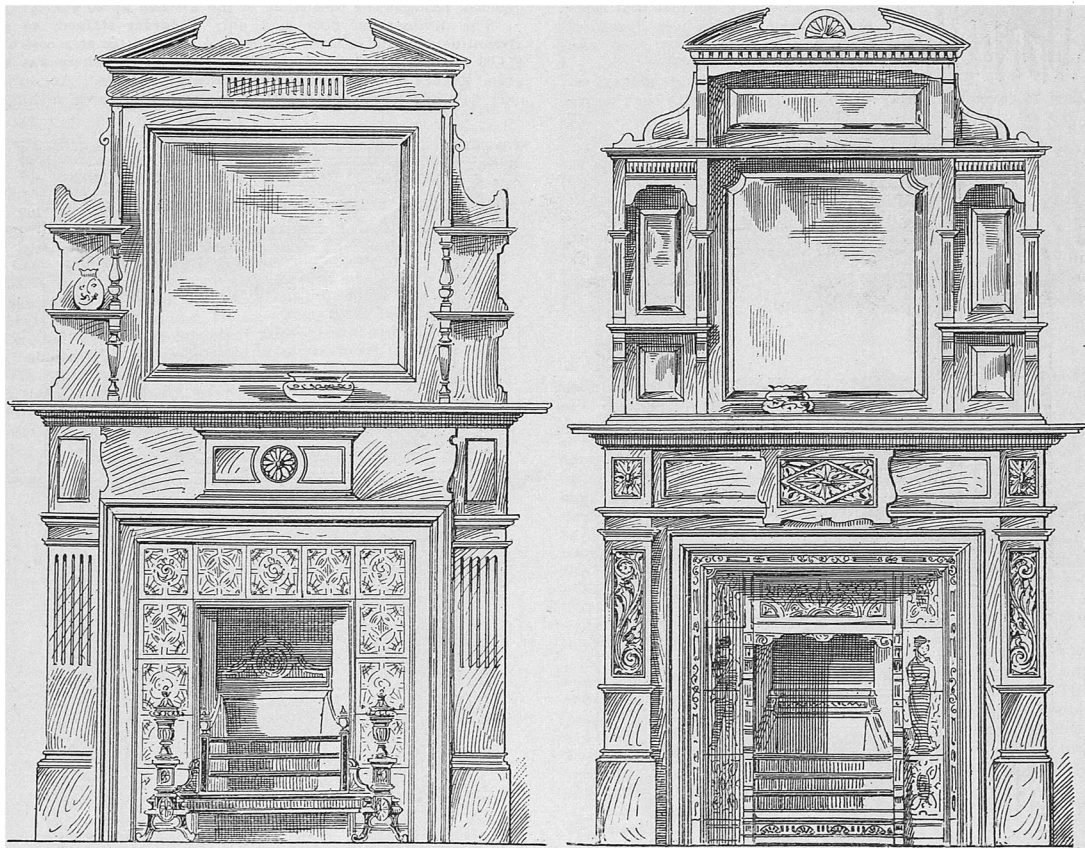
Then came four solid oak chairs with rather high spindle backs which cost \$6.00. Half an inch sawed from the hind legs gave them a more luxurious pitch.

All the windows of these apartments except those of the sleeping rooms, which looked out into the wide court, were furnished with ecrú Holland curtains on spring rollers at the landlord's expense. For long curtains at the single wide window and a top drapery over the very narrow one in the dining-room, some creamy Burmese cloth with figures in old pink cost six cents a yard. Four yards were sufficient and the edging of creamy ball-fringe at eight cents a yard made the cost of these with pole thirty-one cents.

In selecting their apartments our young couple, who were nothing if not artistic, found rooms not yet completed and the obliging landlord allowed them to select the paper, in conse-

unscrewed and eight oxydized handles put in their stead. These cost \$1.00. Amaryllis had a "fad" for pretty china and with all this there was not sufficient shelf room to display all her treasures, so a pair of little cabinets or sets of three shelves in light wood were hung on the wall; one had a shirred backing of the blue Tokio crepe, the other of the same material in a gold shade. The former held bits of Japanese ware in white and the favorite soft reds and olives and creamy white which are such favorites with Japanese china manufacturers, and here and there a plate in white and gold or a bit of red Bohemian glass; on the latter were pieces of Saxony or Dresden in softest blues, or some of the delicious blue ware from China, every piece valuable either on account of its beauty of coloring or shape.

It will be urged that these things cost money, but I am as-



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quence of which "decorated" meant more than it usually does when offered as an inducement to home seekers. The dining-room side walls were covered with a warm terra cotta cartridge paper, its wide frieze in deep cream, pale terra cotta and soft blue, carrying a design of some conventionalized, tropical-leaved plant; the ceiling was a faint cream.

There was a pretty "dresser" in this room from which the glass doors were removed and curtains in blue and cream silk-line hung in their stead. An oak chest of drawers, with a set of four shelves less than half its depth placed on top, did duty as a sideboard. It had served to hold Corydon's books and belongings at college. Curtains of a silvery blue Tokio crepe, which cost fifteen cents a yard, hung in front of the shelves and made a delicious bit of color. The wooden knobs had been

sured that they did not cost more than a set of ordinary china, having been picked up as "bargains" during a year of boarding. Bargains they certainly were in one sense, for when arranged on their shelves they were a joy to look at and gave the room an air of elegance that twice the amount of their cost expended in furniture could not have done; when set out on the damask-covered table they made it glow with beauty, so that eating became a positive luxury to more than one of the senses. According to the figures given me by these artistic and economical nest builders, \$21 91, exclusive of china or table linen had been expended for the dining-room.

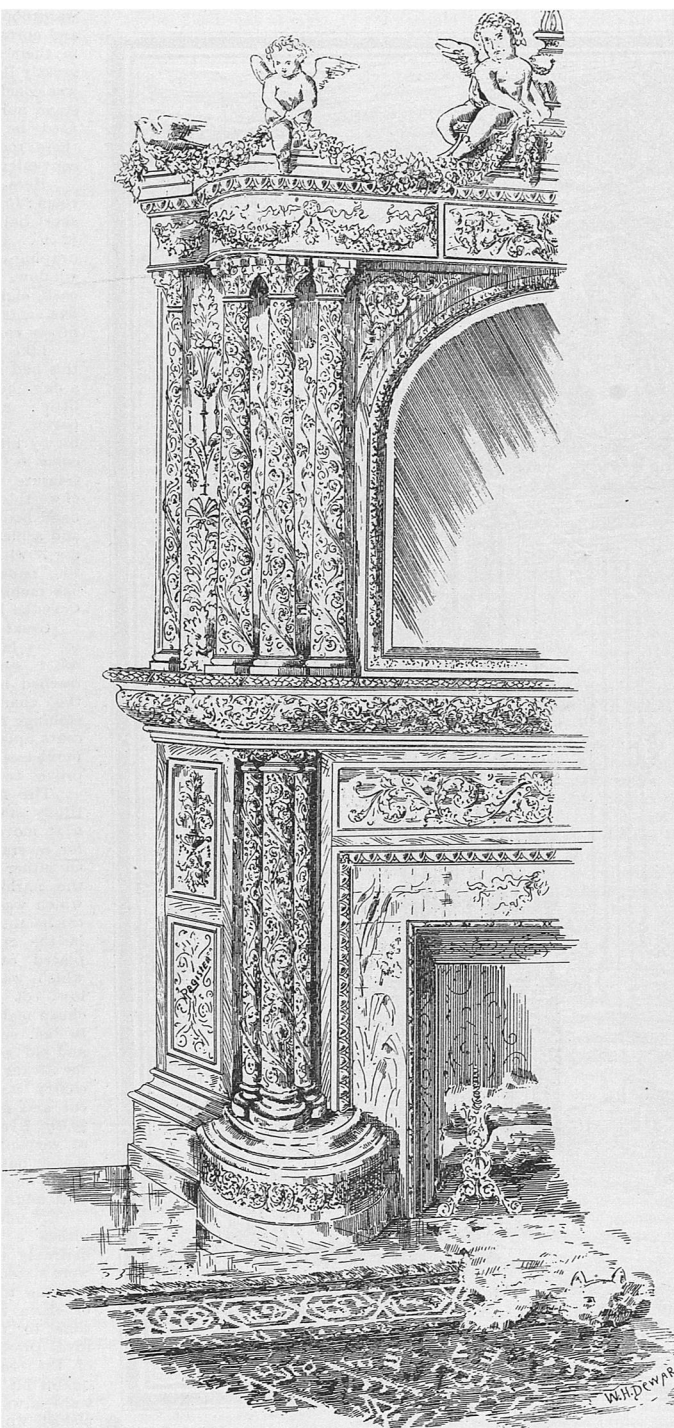
The largest sleeping-room was 9 x 11, finished in the inevitable cherry of the cheap apartment house, but in our nest-builders' hands it became a boudoir dainty enough for any

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lady. They chose a paper with a faint blue ground well covered with dogwood blossoms whose creamy petals were touched as by Nature's own hand with the faintest suggestion of pink; the foliage in creamy olives and dull yellow. The bed was a simple ash affair pleasant to look upon on account of the plainness of its lines and absence of cheap ornamentation. It cost \$3.00; mattress and springs combined composed of spiral springs set on a framework and well covered with hair, cost when made to order \$3.00; pillows \$1.00 each. Fifteen yards of French satine with a stripe of soft blue alternated with one in oak leaves in creams and dull yellows furnished a spread for the bed long enough to draw up over the pillows; drapery for the single window, and curtains for the cherry wardrobe from which the doors were removed, as well to make space in the room as to lessen the expanse of cherry "finish." It was bought at a "sale" and cost thirteen cents per yard.

An unpainted pine bureau from a manufacturer's cost \$3.00. It was enamelled white with a little dull gold in the moldings of the drawers at a cost of another dollar; the dainty furnishings of white and gold and blue were only yellow silesia, white scrim and blue ribbons. Brass handles were seventy-five cents.

At the single window between the long curtains of blue and gold satine ran a wide shelf, and on this stood Amaryllis's work basket, a few choice books, the latest magazine and such-like feminine belongings. A curtain of the satine fell to the floor, concealing two other shelves on which were stored a hat-box and certain tiny shoes and slippers. A triangular shelf which Corydon fitted in the corner held all the accessories of a dressing-table; a little valance

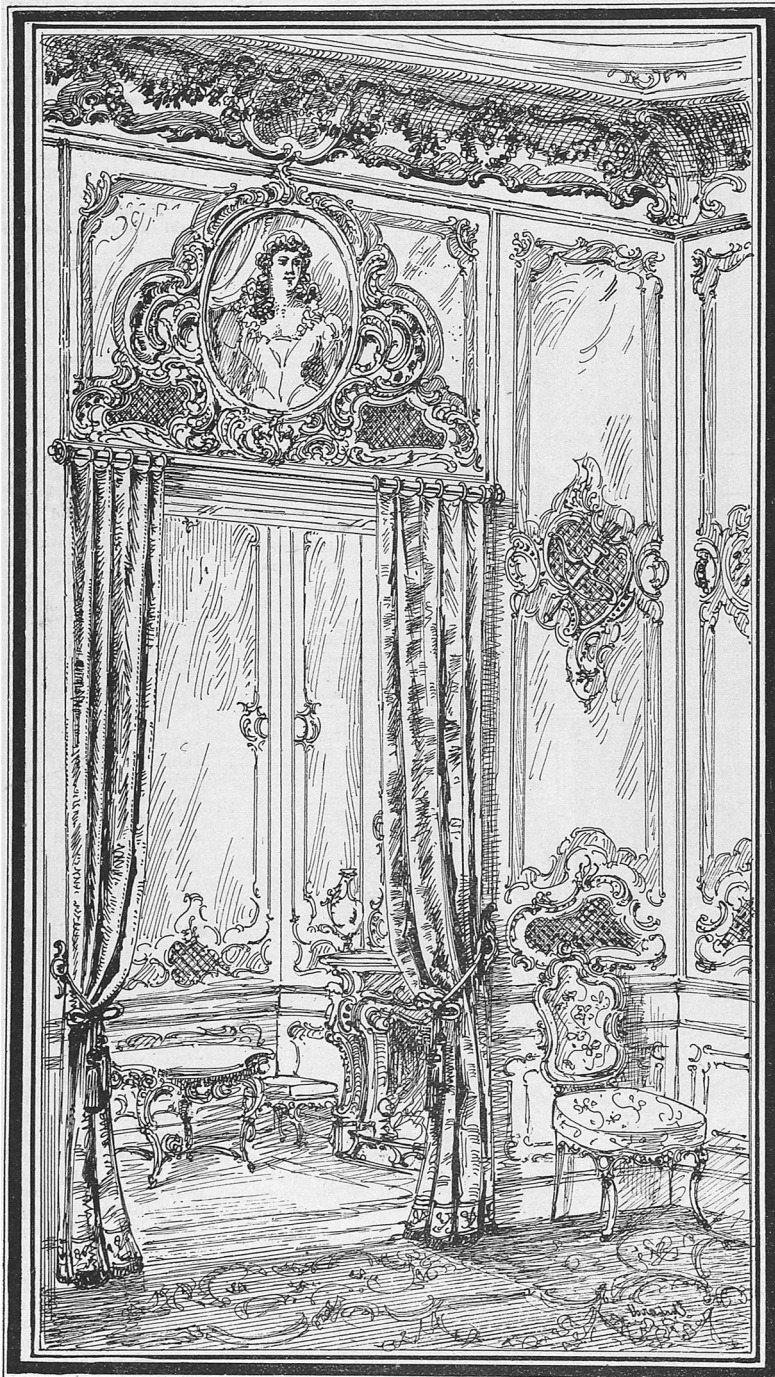


AN ARTISTIC MANTEL-PIECE, EXECUTED BY GEORGE W SMITH & CO., PHILADELPHIA, PA.

of the satine edged with a yellow ball-fringe fell a few inches below the shelf, and a mirror framed in pine and covered with yellow Japanese crepe hung above at a convenient angle to reflect my lady's pretty face. A little white Shaker rocker cost \$1.00.

Nothing has been said about carpets or rugs, but do not be shocked when I tell you that the two rugs, about one by two yards, which lay on the mahogany-stained floor, were nothing more than rag rugs, and the cost (that of the weaving), fifty cents each. Amaryllis had cut and sewed the rags herself from strips of dark woolen goods with a mingling of grays and soft blues, and she declares that she echoes the sentiment of Frank Chaffee, the artist, and that they are "the pride of her heart;" \$30.96 included the articles mentioned and certain incidentals, such as the yellow silesia lining of the bedspread, curtain-pole, etc.

The spare room was smaller still, 7 x 9, I think. The faint buff ground of the wall-paper was covered with wild roses in every shade, from palest pink to the deep, blushing rose that hides its rich color in the shadow of an old fence. A cot with cretonne spread, in cream, reproducing the wild roses of the wall paper, and a second home-made corner dressing table with shelves underneath draped in cream scrim with pink ribbons and a low oak rocker, almost completed the necessary outfit. There were scrim long curtains at the windows and a sash curtain of pink Tokio crepe. There was a little set of hanging shelves on the wall with a book or two to beguile a wakeful guest. There was also a little home-made portfolio of writing paper as well as a cunning inkwell and pen rack so that a letter might be penned to a far-away friend by the occupant of this room. The doors of the



A LOUIS QUINZE INTERIOR, BY THERMIDOR.

wardrobe were taken off here also and curtains of the cretonne hung in their stead with the effect of greatly lighting up the room. It was concluded that neither washstand nor bedroom sets of china need be purchased for either of these rooms, the bath-room being conveniently situated to both.

Here are the figures for this room: Cot with wire springs, \$2.50; short hair mattress, \$6.00; rocker, \$2.50; shelves, \$1.00; scrim for draping corner dressing table and window, eight yards at ten cents each, eighty cents; ribbon, forty-five cents; cretonne, ten yards at fifteen cents, \$1.50. Total, \$14.75.

Like the building of Rome, this had not been accomplished in a day, but had grown little by little; and meantime the little parlor, too, was being furnished bit by bit. Did a pretty etching come in Corydon's way, albeit the treasure was found among a pile of worthless prints outside a second-hand book-store, it was seized upon and a pleasant hour spent in framing it with a mat made from blotting paper of a delicate gray and oak molding sawed and mitred by Corydon himself.

Great amusement was furnished by the fact that at one time they could scarcely wait until they reached home to show each other the charming *remarque* Farrar etchings they had bought for ten cents apiece, and when the several purchases were displayed they proved to be duplicates.

The floors having been beautifully stained and varnished, the next move was to provide shelves for several hundreds of volumes. On either side of the fireplace in the parlor were recesses, one of which was filled with shelves to the height of six feet from the floor; in the other three shelves were placed over a wide, low divan which was nothing more than a low cot with woven springs, a cheap mattress and a Bagdad rug in tan, ecru, pale blue, deep blue and old red stripes. The lumber for divans and shelves cost \$4.00; cherry stain and varnish, \$1.10; cot and mattress, \$4.50; and rug, \$6.00. Every one has not the knack at carpentry that our hero possessed, but the labor of a carpenter would not have been more than \$2.00 additional.

Considering that nothing furnishes a room more nor more desirably than books, no curtains were placed in front of these shelves. On the tops were put such bits of china as they acquired from time to time; now a plate in royal Dresden with the trade mark of the crossed swords; again a quaint bit of Japanese or Doulton ware—always an odd piece and thus picked up at a bargain. They never bought a thing merely be-

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cause they had a niche that ought to be filled, but always waited until they found the right thing to fill it, at what for them was a right price.

Some other furniture must be provided, and when a furniture store announced as a leader an oak settee, with two rockers, two chairs and a little stand for \$18.50, they felt that the room was almost completed. Comfortable cushions of old blue velours were added to the settee, and the two rockers at a further cost of \$2.00. Two feather pillows for the corner divan cost \$1.00 each and Bagdad squares for covering—one in tan, the other in old blue—cost \$2.50 each.

An odd pair of Madras curtains—real Madras, that had they been mates would have cost \$8.00—were found, being mismated, for \$2.50. The difference was so slight that only the initiated would have detected it. They were in palest olives with tan, old blue and old red in the design. Each curtain being three and a half yards long, one sufficed for each window. It was cut in unequal lengths of two, and one and a half yards; these were hung from brass poles, the longest piece being looped back a little above the sill, the other about two thirds of the way below the top. The effect was very pretty and graceful. The poles cost \$1.00.

At a second-hand furniture store they discovered a quaint old desk in rosewood, which cost \$7.00, with \$3.00 for polishing and brass fittings. The table at which our author hammered out his plots and finished off his characters hot from the forges of his fancy was nothing more than a squalid deal table 30 x 42, sandpapered and stained and varnished with greatest labor and care into a fair similitude of rosewood. The brass claw feet and several inches of the legs, however, were all that displayed themselves under the quaint Algerian cover, which was a bargain at \$6.75.

The floor was still bare but for its polish, and so my friends began to haunt rug sales. It was with much perturbation of spirit that they paid \$18 for what was said to be a veritable antique—a Kazac—5 x 7, rich in design and soft in coloring. When a friend who was a connoisseur declared it worth \$40 they went on their way—the way of further purchases—rejoicing. At one time an Anatolian like a rich stained glass window fell in their way for \$13.50; again a small Kazac with the date, 1845, in Arabic characters in one end, and a quaint Carabagh rug cost \$5 each.

They never lose interest in their furnishing, for it is never completed. In buying in this way—in installments—there is always room to add some new and desirable article; \$108.35, exclusive of bric-a-brac and pictures, had been spent on this little study which in the eyes of their friends and themselves is a dream, suggesting not only comfort but luxury and richness.

The long private hall was covered with fifteen yards of matting of a golden-brown tint—a soft, pliable weave, with cotton warp—costing forty cents a yard. So far they have spent about \$325.00. They are adding treasures from time to time.

This is only one of the many ways in which different people make their homes.

LEATHER DECORATION.



THE present time leather decoration of one sort or another is in the front rank of fashionable art work. Somewhat in vogue is the art of coloring and gilding or silvering, embossed leather designs after the style of old Italian work. A very gorgeous effect is obtained by these means, but the sober taste of the English will hardly admit of the work becoming truly popular here. No one can deny that finely carved dining-room

chairs look magnificent with the seats covered with embossed leather, painted with harmonious colors; but they can be suitably used in mansions which are decorated and furnished in princely style.

A much quieter tone is secured by the use of architect inks. Embossed designs are tinted with these inks, several soft shades of color being used, and the decoration certainly proves extremely artistic. We have not ourselves tested the lasting qualities of the inks, so are not able to say whether in this respect

they would bear comparison with the pigments, but for the ornamentation of blotters and small things they are charming.

Still another mode of carrying out designs on leather is popular, but here the needle and inks take the place of brush and pigments. A clever embroiderer can produce on a tan leather ground an exquisite harmony of colors, one shade blended into another with almost as imperceptible gradations as an artist can secure with his brush. It is not easy work at the first start off, but it is well worth practicing. Needles such as are used for sewing gloves are employed. Arabesques and conventional floral designs are preferable to any others for embroideries on leather.

Now we come to the latest method of leather decorating. If any of our readers have ever tried to paint with oil colors on chamois leather they will almost doubt the possibility of making on this ground as clear, perfect outlines as on canvas; they will know that the colors run and soak in, much as clear water does when it falls on blotting paper. Yet this can be done.

Once upon a time (as the old tale begins) an Englishman living in New Zealand was trying everything he knew, or could think of, to make a successful painting on chamois leather. Failure after failure attended his efforts, and he was for giving up the attempt in despair, when one of his fellows, a Maori, who had been watching him, stepped forward and asked him why he did not try boiling down the leaves of a certain tree, and using the liquor as a medium for mixing his colors. Curious as to the result which might accrue from the employment of such a medium, and the desire to conquer the difficulties which stood in his way, he agreed to give the stuff a trial, and, to his satisfaction, as well as his astonishment, he found he could paint on the chamois with perfect ease. He has now returned to England, bringing a quantity of the leaves with him.

This is essentially a flat decoration. No attempt is made to give even the appearance of relief to any parts of the designs. It is difficult to give any descriptions of these; they are somewhat Moorish in character, and all of them quaint that we have seen. The colorings are quiet, all the tints being subdued, and the outlines are never pronounced. Sometimes portions of the leather are left untouched with color.

The skin of the chamois is never of any great size. If one is cut into a square it can seldom be used for anything bigger than a blotter, but there are many smaller articles the chamois will answer for, such as card cases, telegram cases and book covers. For these soft blues, bordering on peacock, will be seen in combination with Indian red and the yellow color of the chamois shaded in parts to a deeper tint of the same. Though from one skin alone but a comparatively small article can be made, two or more may be judiciously joined, so that there is practically no limit to the fancy articles which can be produced, provided that leather is a suitable material for the different purposes to which they will be put.

The work is well adapted for photo frames and screens. Beautiful panels for cabinet doors might be done on chamois, also for screens. The fashion of hanging full curtains on screens in place of panels is fast asserting itself. For a time past curtains have been hung below painted panels, but now they cover both folds of a screen entirely. They are made of some thickish material, such as Roman satin, and are painted with small bouquets of flowers. The heading is box plaited, the plaits being apparently held in place by a cord. This plan might be adopted, only substituting painted chamois for the Roman satin. The medium is sold by the leading upholsterers.

THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER is a publication for the use of everyone interested in a beautiful home.

It tells how to decorate and furnish ordinary houses, showing how artistic merit can be secured with an economic outlay of money.

It publishes practical charts, showing how to decorate and furnish city flats.

It publishes beautiful charts, showing how to decorate and furnish country cottages.

It describes new processes of embroidery, as applied to draperies and dresses.

It describes and illustrates the latest styles in window draperies and upholstery fabrics.

Wherever THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER circulates, there decorators and dealers in house furnishings thrive, and the wealth of the community in house furnishings is doubled, because of the finer appreciation of beauty exhibited in the quality of the articles, which is brought about by reading our publication.

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